

Your Worst Nightmare

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Summary: Simba has to face his own dreams one night. Can he wake up before his darkest fears actually manage to kill him?

***Chapter 1*: Chapter 1: Hago Isn't Happy**

AN: Didn't expect a new one so soon, did you? Well, to be honest, I'm eager to get to the story that comes *after* this one, so I figured I might as well treat you all. Enjoy!

Your Worst Nightmare

Chapter One: Hago Isn't Happy

Hago cried out in pain, his voice echoing through the jungle. He wasn't happy.

"Stupid, *stupid* back!" he shouted at his back, which was covered in cuts and scrapes he had received from an encounter with Simba yesterday.

Simba. Just the mention of his name earned a reaction of utter disgust from Hago. Simba was only a little lion cub, but he turned out to be the biggest nuisance Hago had ever encountered before. It was truly unbelievable. What made this cub so special? Twice now he had stopped Hago's plans. Twice! That just felt embarrassing. Defeated by a cub – what are the odds?

He'd barely managed to get out of the Outlands last night after his last plan to control the Pride Lands went horribly wrong. He tried kidnapping Simba's best friend, Nala, and he would have almost succeeded if it wasn't for Simba coming to her rescue, the two of them escaping.

He was so close, too! He had teamed up with the other sinister lion who wanted the Pride Lands for his own, Scar. They seemed to think alike – they had the same ideas and plans. But then the two cubs had to wreck everything they had planned, and Scar had the nerve to blame Hago for the failure of the scheme!

He and Scar had ended up in a bit of a scuffle, which Scar won, of course. Hago was at a disadvantage because of his cursed back. He'd suffered problems with it for such a long time, and didn't think he'd ever get it fixed. For some reason his magical cobra staff didn't seem to have healing properties. Probably due to the fact that it was simply *too* much power, to heal the sick and fix the broken. That would make you a god...

Hago didn't think he'd ever felt so low before. Had he ever been this degraded? No, he hadn't. This was the type of feeling you tended to get when two cubs foiled your plans for control of a great and mighty kingdom.

Hago wanted revenge. But he just didn't know how to accomplish such a feat. Help wouldn't assist him too much. He'd tried getting help before, and what a mess *that* had turned out to be!

He wanted Simba and Nala dead. Just dead. Plan and simple. That was all he wanted. Their heads removed and hung up on poles. That would satisfy him. He needed a *really* clever plan if he was going to achieve this...

Well, for a start he was going to do this all by himself. He couldn't trust anyone else, because everyone he 'befriended' always ended up hating him in the end. He'd seen what had happened with Scar... He wasn't going to make that mistake again. *Ever*.

He could take care of things by himself. That's what he was best at. He was the master of magic! No one could possibly be good enough to help him! *No one!*

"Why, brother, you're looking a bit gloomy today, aren't you?"

"Simba!" Nala cried when she realised he had fallen asleep again.

Simba immediately jumped up, wide awake. "What is it?" he asked, looking left and right.

"You fell asleep again," Nala informed him.

Simba's eyes widened. "Again?" he exclaimed. "This is getting messed up. I'm Prince Simba! I'm not supposed to fall asleep before bedtime!"

"Well, you *have* fallen asleep before bedtime, Simba," Nala told him. "*Four* times."

Simba put a paw to his forehead. "There's something wrong with me! I'm getting a fever or something! I'm getting some kind of rare sleep disease!"

"Or maybe you're just tired," Nala suggested.

Simba smiled. "Me? Tired? I don't think so."

"I think you are," Nala said with a smile. "Especially after your *daring* rescue attempt yesterday. You must be exhausted."

Nala was of course referring to the hectic events of yesterday. Scar and Hago had kidnapped Nala yesterday and held her prisoner in the Outlands. They wanted Simba to try and rescue her, just so they could kill them both, and make it slow and painful for all the 'trouble' they had caused them. Luckily, Simba managed to bravely rescue Nala from Scar and Hago's clutches before they could do anything to them.

Well, Nala was a little shaken up after the ordeal, and she had suffered a nasty bruise and some cuts due to her captors' maliciousness. She was otherwise fine, though. She thought it was very brave of her best friend to rescue her like that. He must have really cared about her to do that...

Well, he did say he'd always take care of her. She believed that. She believed every word of it. The two of them were quite inseparable. The best of friends.

Nala realised that Simba had fallen asleep again. She rolled her eyes. "This is just getting silly," she said to herself.

She prodded him, trying to wake him up again. "Simba? Simba...?"

Simba's eyes snapped open and he pounced at Nala, trying to pin her down.

So that was his plan, eh? Pretend to be asleep just so he could try and pin her down again. Well, Nala wasn't going to admit defeat *that* easily!

She yanked on his tail – his ultimate weak spot – and she smiled as Simba fell backwards onto the ground instantly.

"Good try, Simba," she told him, grinning. "Just not good enough."

Simba narrowed his eyes and smiled. "Admit it. I almost had ya."

Nala smiled. "Nah... I don't think I will. Not *yet*."

"What do you mean, 'Not yet'?" Simba asked.

"I'll only congratulate you when you actually *manage* to pin me. But the way things are going, it doesn't look like that's gonna happen," she teased. "Now why don't you just go back to sleep? After all, you are so tired."

Simba tried to argue. "Hey, I'm not—"

Simba fell to the ground, asleep instantly. Nala couldn't help but burst out laughing. That was just too funny for words to even describe!

***Chapter 2*: Chapter 2: Hago's Brother**

Chapter Two: Hago's Brother

Hago's eyes widened upon hearing the voice behind him. He turned around to see a lion with a slim body and blue eyes. He had an eyebrow raised, eyeing Hago curiously.

Hago sighed. "How... very nice to see you, Bora," he said, greeting his brother.

"Good to see you too, Hago," Bora told his little brother. "How's your whole 'I'm going to take over the Pride Lands' thing going?"

Hago frowned. "Not as well as I hoped."

Bora looked surprised. "Oh, really? I must say I'm surprised, Hago. You always seemed so confident you could do it, but here you are moping around the jungle." Bora sat down on the ground. "Go on, tell me your troubles."

Hago stared at his big brother, who looked ready to listen. Hago sighed. "Oh, all right. I might as well. After all, you're the only person I can confide in."

"I know, Hago," his brother said. "I know."

What Hago said was true. His brother, Bora, really was the only person he could trust and confide in. The only person he could really talk to properly.

Out of Hago's entire family, his older brother was the only person he actually *liked*. Hago never liked his family, because they always ridiculed him for having no real magical powers of his own.

Once he had received his magical staff, he used it to kill his parents and siblings, with the exception of his brother, who had actually *helped* Hago in committing the malicious act.

Hago sat opposite his brother, and began to explain why he was in this position. "Well, twice I've tried to take over the Pride Lands now, and every time my plans have gone up in smoke."

Bora's eyes widened. "Really? *Twice*? That's ridiculous! You should have been able to do it straight away! That staff I made for you has enough power inside to level the Pride Lands five times over!"

"It needs to be done cleverly, Bora," Hago told his brother. "I can't go about slaughtering the whole pride, you know. If I did, then who is going to hunt my food for me, hmm?"

Bora shrugged. "Good point. But come on, you should have accomplished it by now. What's stopping you?"

"Certain obstacles have... prevented me from achieving my goal sooner than I hoped," Hago replied. "I've come across a few little – and I mean that literally – nuisances in my efforts. I have gained two enemies. Two extraordinary, powerful, troublesome enemies."

"Jeez, these guys sound tough," Bora commented. "Who are they?"

"Two cubs," Hago replied embarrassedly.

Bora burst out laughing, rolling about on the ground. "Two cubs!" he exclaimed through laughter. "I didn't think you were the joking type, but you sure know how to make a guy laugh!"

"I'm not joking!" Hago exclaimed, annoyed.

Bora stopped laughing, and looked at Hago through narrow eyes. "You're not serious, are you?"

Hago nodded. "I'm afraid so."

"Two cubs?" said Bora. "Really?" He chuckled. "Two cubs have foiled your grand plans for total domination of the Pride Lands! How embarrassing, Hago. I actually feel sorry for you."

"I feel sorry for *myself*," Hago told Bora. "Those cubs have caused me more trouble than I can bare! First they wreck my plans to control the universe, and then they put my kidnapping plot to a halt. It's driving me insane!"

Bora shook his head. "Hago, Hago, Hago, my dear brother. What am I going to do with you?" He got up and walked over

to Hago. "Listen, you need to be tough and strong! You need to show no mercy!"

"I *never* show any mercy!" Hago argued loudly. "But these cubs always manage to escape somehow. Last time I was so close to accomplishing my plan, but then they managed to get away at the last second. And now I'm left with cuts all over my stupid back!"

Bora rolled his eyes and sighed. "You know you could fix that troublesome back of yours if you just give it a good whack, right?"

"A good whack?" repeated Hago. "What do you mean?"

Bora sighed again. "I'll take care of it, don't you worry. I've done this before."

"Really?" said Hago, surprised. "Have you?"

Bora smiled. "No. I was just trying to make you feel better. I'd just better be careful I don't hit the wrong spot on your back, otherwise I might sever a major organ if I'm not too careful. Then I'll have to deal with the mess of clearing up all that blood and bone and cartilage and—"

"I get the point already!" Hago interrupted. "Just do it!"

"Fine." Bora slapped Hago hard on his back, causing Hago to cry out in pain as the loud sound of one of Hago's bones cracking could be heard. "Happy, now?"

Hago shot up to look his brother in the eye. "No, I'm not happy you little—" Hago glanced at his back. It didn't seem as crooked as it once was. He jumped about on the ground for a few seconds, testing to see if Bora had actually managed to heal him.

"See?" said Bora, smiling. "Told you."

"Yes!" Hago exclaimed. "You're right! Finally! I no longer have that cursed ailment in my back! I feel much better now!"

"I knew it'd work," Bora told him. "Simple trick. I'm surprised you never thought of it before, really."

Hago felt much happier now. Maybe today was the day things changed for him! "Thank you. You have *no* idea how much it means to me."

"And tell you what, I'll help you take care of your little cub problem, too," Bora informed him.

Hago looked surprised. "Really?"

Bora nodded. "Uh-huh. I'm sure we can think of a way to... *eliminate* the two of them."

Hago laughed evilly. "Oh, brother, I like the way you talk."

"I know. After all, you did learn from the best," said Bora. "I know quite a simple plan that will almost certainly work. With a bit of my magic, you'll be in control of the Pride Lands in no time at all."

"That sounds good," Hago said, an evil smile on his face. "Very good indeed."

AN: Anyone notice in a previous story where it said Hago was on good terms with his brother? Sneaky little foreshadowing I put in there. What's Bora's plan? You'll have to find out tomorrow.

Chapter 3: Chapter 3: The Dream Master

AN: Two more chapters, just for you!

Chapter Three: The Dream Master

Simba yawned as soon as he woke up. He looked around. Everything looked in order – it was getting dark; no one was around the water hole; Nala was snuggled up close to him... Wait, what?

Apparently Nala had fallen asleep next to him, and had decided to get a little bit closer to him. *Very* close, you could say. Maybe she had even done it purposely...

Simba wasn't the type of person to suspect that Nala would do such a thing.

Why would she want to snuggle up with me? Simba asked himself. *That just sounds stupid... But she did it before! The night before Nala did exactly the same thing! So if Nala did it the night before, and if she's doing it now, then that must mean... Absolutely nothing! I've just wasted two minutes worrying over nothing!*

Simba wasn't complaining, though. If Nala wanted to sleep with him, then that was fine by him... Maybe it was his... reward for rescuing her yesterday? Yeah! That was it!

Simba decided to lay back down, and as soon as he rested his head beside Nala's, her eyes opened.

Nala looked quite embarrassed, and was blushing behind her fur. "H-hi, Simba," she stammered. "What are... y-you doing up?"

Simba laughed nervously. "Uh... I wasn't tired anymore. Why exactly are you snuggled up to me?"

Nala thought fast. "Sleepwalking," she lied.

Simba's eyes widened. "Sleepwalking?" he repeated. "Since when did you start to sleepwalk?"

"Since now," she replied with a nervous smile.

"Oh," Simba said quietly. "It... uh, kinda makes sense now, huh?"

Nala quickly got up. "Yep. Perfect sense. I promise I'll try not to sleepwalk next time."

"Oh, it doesn't matter," Simba told her. "I didn't really mind."

Nala looked quite surprised. "You... You didn't?"

"Nah!" Simba exclaimed. "It's fine!" He smiled warmly at her.

Nala smiled back. She giggled. "Oh, okay, then."

Simba looked up at the sky, which was now filled with stars. "Uh-oh," he said, realising it was night. "We should have gone back a while ago. Mom and Dad are gonna kill me!"

"Let's just say we were sleeping," Nala suggested. "That way they can't really blame us."

"Good idea," Simba agreed. He wagged his back at her for the second time in two days. "I'll give you a piggyback ride again."

Nala smiled. "Again? You're feeling generous today."

"Anything for my best friend," he told her.

"So, Bora, what is this fantastic plan you have?" Hago asked his big brother, eager to hear what his maniacal plan was.

"Well, as you know my power is that I can control dreams," Bora informed Hago.

"Yeah? And...?"

"I was thinking I should just give one of the cubs the old sleepwalking curse. You know the one," Bora explained.

"Yes... the one where you fill their heads with nightmares of their greatest fears, casing them to sleepwalk off the nearest cliff. It was always one of my favourites, you know."

"I thought it would be," said Bora. "It's more your style. I know you do love a good murder. Out of interest, who are these cubs, exactly?"

"You're not gonna believe this, but one of them is Prince Simba," Hago replied.

"Prince Simba, eh? The heir to the throne. Yes, I hear that some lion called Scar has quite a hate for that cub."

"Please don't mention Scar," Hago pleaded. "It hurts me physically."

"Don't tell me you've met him?"

"Met him? I've *worked* with him!" Hago revealed. "He's the one that helped me to try and kill the two cubs yesterday! I would have caught the two of them if it wasn't for him telling me to go after them! How could I go after them? My back is injured! Well, my back *used* to be injured, but you get my point! He doesn't like to get his paws dirty, that's his problem. He always gets other people to do his work for him."

"I've never met him myself," said Bora. "I've heard from others that he's quite a psycho."

"He's a maniac. A complete and utter maniac."

"Good thing you got away when you did. Anyway, back to the plan. I think we should give Prince Simba the old sleepwalking treatment. Should be quite fun to watch."

"What about his friend?" Hago asked. "She's the other one. She's always hanging around with him."

"Well, once Prince Simba is dead, she'll be no threat to us at all. She'll be too distraught and upset, won't she? *Everyone* will be too distraught and upset. It's a genius plan! Everyone will be so upset that they won't have it in them to fight against us when we enslave the whole of the kingdom!"

Bora laughed evilly. Hago's eyes widened. He didn't think his brother laughed evilly. He was normally the calm one,. Maybe he was picking up a bit of his little brother's psychotic touch?

"Remember, *I'm* the one who will be crowned King!" Hago declared.

Bora nodded. "Of course, of course. I'm not one for hostile takeovers myself. I simply prefer to incite chaos into the minds of the sleepy. I'm a free spirit, you of all people should know that."

"Yes, that's why you helped me kill the rest of our annoying family. They were always on your back, weren't they?"

"Oh, yes," Bora replied, frowning. "I'm glad I helped you. We were the only normal ones in that family. Who ever heard of being 'kind-hearted' and 'polite'? That's not the way the world works. The world is run by power-mad people who want to control all that they can! And I *will* control all that I can!"

Hago laughed evilly, his voice echoing into the night. Bora smiled. "Nice laugh, brother."

"Why, thank you," Hago said, recovering from his insane laugh. "I have been practising it for a while now, you know."

"I can see," Bora observed, looking up at the night sky. "It's a good night, tonight. The two cubs will be dozing off to sleep right about now. Should be the perfect time to strike."

"Indeed," Hago agreed. "But how are we going to get into the Pride Lands? I bet ever since the events of yesterday they've increased the security."

"There's no need to worry," Bora assured his brother. "Remember, that staff has enough power in it to level Pride Rock five times over. We just need to zap ourselves with a simple invisibility spell."

"It's only temporary, you know," Hago informed his brother. "It'll last us about five minutes."

"That's plenty of time to do the deed." Bora held up his paw. "One touch on the cub's forehead and I'll be done. It's simple."

***Chapter 4*: Chapter 4: Put to Sleep**

Chapter Four: Put to Sleep

Simba and Nala wandered into the den at Pride Rock. Wanting to get it over and done with, he decided on telling his mother his excuse – which for once was actually true – right away.

"Look, Mom, I'm sorry we were out late. It's just that—"

"Simba!" Sarabi cried, like she was surprised to see him for some reason. "What are you doing in so early?"

Simba and Nala looked at each other curiously. "*Early?*" Simba exclaimed. "How are we early? We were supposed to be in, like, half an hour ago!"

"Oh, because of how brave you were yesterday, your father and I have decided to let you stay up two hours longer," Sarabi explained.

Simba and Nala's mouths dropped open in unison. "Two hours longer?" Simba exclaimed. "Why didn't you say so before?"

"Didn't I mention it before?" asked Sarabi.

"Actually, you didn't," Simba informed her. "At all."

"Must've slipped my mind," Sarabi told her son.

"So we can stay out longer?" Simba presumed.

His mother nodded. "Yes, Simba. We've decided you're responsible enough now. After all, not many cubs can take on two angry lions and live to tell the tale."

Simba was suddenly reminded of something. "Where's Dad?" he asked.

"He left to go and find your Uncle Scar," Sarabi replied, expressing disgust at the 'Uncle Scar' part, because of the treachery he had committed.

It had only emerged yesterday that Scar had been plotting to take over the Pride Lands for a long time, and had been hatching scheme after scheme to try and obtain the kingdom. No one else knew anything about this until Nala was kidnapped yesterday. It had come as quite a shock to Mufasa to find out that his own brother had betrayed them. Scar was always the jealous type, but no one expected him to be capable of such evil.

"He hasn't found him yet, has he?" Simba asked, knowing what his mother would reply with.

"No," Sarabi replied. "Your father says he's fled the Outlands without a trace. I don't know where he's disappeared to. Good riddance, I say. The less we see of him the better."

"Oh, okay." Simba turned to Nala. "Come on, I'll race ya to the water hole!"

The two cubs bounded out of the den, happy that they were now allowed to stay up longer. Longer than the other cubs, in fact. That was just a bonus, though.

Sarabi smiled as she watched the two of them disappear. *They'd make such a sweet couple*, she thought to herself.

"That's my tail you're stepping on!" Hago snapped at Bora.

"Well, excuse me, but it's quite hard to see who's in front of you when they're invisible!" his brother retorted.

Thanks to his magical cobra staff, Hago had made both himself and his brother invisible, enabling them both to sneak into the Pride Lands.

Hago was right, too. Security had been tightened, and several lionesses stood good at the borders of the Pride Lands, ready to stop – and kill, if they needed to – any intruders.

Hago and Bora managed to slip in easily, though, avoiding any kind of detection. After all, how could you be detected when you were invisible?

"So, where would we find these two cubs?" Bora asked Hago.

"Trust me, I'll know. One word from their irritating voices will tell me exactly where they are. And then once we've found them, you can work your dream-altering magic. Got it?"

Bora nodded, but he really didn't need to because he was invisible. "Got ya. I'll put the little girl to sleep and give the Prince my special sleepwalking spell. Trust me, he'll be dead by tomorrow morning. The gorge isn't too far away from here. He'll sleepwalk right over the edge and go *splat!* on the ground. All your troubles will be erased, my brother."

"I can't begin to tell you how much this means to me," Hago told him. "All the trouble I've suffered will feel worthwhile when it's all over."

"Anything for a family member," said Bora. "In this case my *only* family member. Well, only *surviving* one, at least."

"Come on," said Hago as he continued walking. "Let's try the water hole. That's where most of the little brats hang around."

"Okay."

Simba and Nala were lying next to each other in the middle of a grassy field, watching the stars up above. This was something they had always wanted to do. All the other cubs got to, but because their parents imposed a restriction on when they had to go to sleep they couldn't. Finally they had a little bit more freedom! Things were looking up!

"Cool, huh?" Simba said to Nala.

"Yeah..." she replied, amazed by all the different sights she could see in the sky above her. "It really is something..."

Simba dared to try and get closer to Nala, shuffling over to her so their fur was touching. He stared at her. "Yeah... something..."

Nala turned her head so she was staring into Simba's eyes. "Simba?"

Simba smiled. "Yes, Nala?"

"Do you get this... feeling?" she asked.

"Yeah," Simba replied. "I do."

"This really weird feeling?"

Simba was nodding furiously. "Yeah!"

"Like..."

"Yes, yes, yes!"

"We're being watched."

"Yeah! Wait, what?" Simba asked, his face falling.

Nala looked around the empty field. "It's like somebody is watching us. It's really weird."

Simba looked down at the ground. "Oh. Yeah... that's pretty weird."

She laughed as she lay back down. "But that just sounds silly. Like anyone would bother watching us!"

"I'm afraid that's where you're wrong, my dear," an all too familiar voice spoke.

Nala shot up straight away. "Huh? Who's there?"

Suddenly, Hago and Bora – who Simba and Nala did not recognise – shimmered into view.

"Okay, that's pretty weird," Simba commented.

"I wish I could say it's nice to see you, but I can't, for obvious reasons," Hago told them.

"What do you want from us?" Nala demanded. "To kidnap us again?"

Hago laughed. "Oh, no. I'm never going there again. You saw how it went yesterday: not well at all. So, instead I've decided to use a bit of magical help from my brother, Bora."

"So you're the two little troublemakers my brother has to put up with?" said Bora. "I can see why he hates you so much. I've only been here three minutes and I'm already irritated." He turned to Hago. "I feel so sorry for you."

"Just get out!" Simba ordered. "You know you can't win."

"That's where you're wrong, you foolish boy," Hago told him. "By the morning you'll be dead, and trust me when I say it'll be quite horrific."

"Oh, yeah?" Simba challenged. "How are you gonna do that?"

"I'm not going to do it. My brother is. Go on, Bora, do your stuff."

"With pleasure," Bora said as he approached the two cubs.

"Hey, what are you—"

Simba didn't get to finish his sentence. Bora tapped Simba on his forehead, and his eyes rolled into the back of his head and he fell to the ground, fast asleep.

Bora did the same with Nala, and she too suffered the same reaction. Bora smiled once he had finished his – simple – job, and turned to his brother.

"Piece of cake," he told Hago. "Whatever cake is."

"Excellent work, brother," said Hago, grinning evilly at the two sleeping cubs. "And you're sure this will work?"

"Of course," Bora replied. "I've done it hundreds of times. By tomorrow the prince will be dead, and his friend and everyone else he knows will be a nervous wreck. Are you happy now?"

"Elated," he responded.

AN: Poor Simba and Nala. They just can't stay out of trouble for long enough, can they?

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: Simba's Nightmare

AN: You want more? Well, have it!

Chapter Five: Simba's Nightmare

Simba tossed and turned in his sleep, feeling the beginnings of a nightmare. But it was going to be his *worst* nightmare, and one that he actually might not survive...

Simba's eyes snapped open. He looked around, and saw that it was morning. He was in the same field he had fallen asleep in, and everything looked absolutely fine. No changes at all.

Well, except for the fact that Nala wasn't there anymore.

Simba double-checked the area to make sure she wasn't anywhere in sight. Nala was gone. Where? Simba didn't know.

What happened last night? Simba asked himself, rubbing his head and trying to think back to the events of the previous night. He tried and tried as hard as he could to remember, but it was like something was blocking out the memory. Something was preventing him from remembering.

Simba shrugged. *She has to be around here somewhere*, Simba thought. *She can't have been kidnapped again. Could she?*

Simba shook his head at the thought Nala had been taken again. Why would Hago try the same plan twice? The first time it didn't go so well, so what would make a second attempt at it different?

She's probably down by the water hole, Simba told himself, trying to think of a reasonable explanation. *She just... forgot to wake me up. Either that or it's one of her jokes. And if it is then I'll get her back by pinning her!*

Simba decided to head over to the water hole. That was the most likely place Nala would go to. There wasn't really anywhere else, except for the den back at Pride Rock, but why would she go back there? They hated it there!

Did she fall asleep too? Simba asked himself, trying to remember again. He started backtracking, speaking aloud.

"Okay, so we were here watching the stars. She was talking about them and then I..." Simba blushed at his next thought. "Snuggled up to her," he whispered to himself with a little laugh. "And then..." Simba groaned when he couldn't remember. "Great! I can't remember a thing after that! I hate it when I can't remember anything!"

Unfortunately, Simba had no idea that things were going to get a lot worse. Far worse than not being able to remember the events of last night.

He had no idea that the night hadn't even passed, and this was all in his head. All just the beginnings of a horrible, horrible, *horrible* nightmare...

"Here comes the good part," Bora told Hago as they watched the two cubs sleep.

Simba was tossing and turning in his sleep. His nightmare was beginning. And then, after a few more seconds Simba got up – eyes closed – and stood in the field.

"Here it comes!" said Bora excitedly.

Simba started to walk. *Sleepwalk*. He made his way across the field, past the laughing Hago and Bora.

"See?" Bora gestured to Simba. "He'll walk right off the nearest cliff while he suffers quite a traumatic nightmare."

"What kind of nightmare?" Hago asked.

Bora shrugged. "I actually have no idea. I can *induce* dreams, not create them. That'd be cool if I could, though. I could give myself the best dreams ever. It'd be great! I'd never wake up again! I could live in the dream world forever!"

"Yeah, until you die of starvation a few days later," Hago remarked with a frown.

"Oh." Bora's face fell. "Forgot about that." He chuckled. "Guess it wouldn't be such a good thing after all, huh?"

"Indeed," Hago replied. He looked at his brother with an evil smile. "Should we... follow him?"

"What about her?" Bora asked, pointing to Nala.

"Ah, just leave her," Hago responded, waving him away with a paw. "Let's just follow the little brat. I want to enjoy seeing him splatter on the ground, and I want to hear the sound of his bones shattering into pieces!"

"You've gotten real psychotic since I gave you that staff, you know that?" Bora pointed out.

"So?" Hago retorted. "I deserve to be a little 'off the scale'. After all, I do adore power so much. You should follow after me."

"Hey, I taught you all this stuff, and I spent a whole day making that staff just for you. You'd be nothing without me."

Hago frowned and narrowed his eyes. "That's not important right now."

Bora rolled his eyes as Hago walked away. "If you say so," he said before following his little brother.

"There you are!" Simba exclaimed upon seeing Nala sitting beside the water hole. "I've been looking everywhere for you!"

Nala turned around, an unimpressed look on her face. "Sorry, do I *know* you?" she spat.

"Huh?" Simba exclaimed, confused. "Oh, I get it. Another joke. Like leaving me this morning. Ha, ha, very funny."

"Oh, I know you," Nala said, pretending to finally recognise him. "You're that *outsider* who nobody likes."

Simba cocked his head to the side, smiling. "Outsider? Is that the best you can come up with? Come on, Nala. I'm not falling for your joke!"

"The only joke here is *you*," said Nala cruelly. "I don't even know what you're still doing here. You don't deserve to look at me."

Simba slowly came to realise that something was wrong. "What do you mean?" he asked, narrowing his eyes at her.

Nala rolled her eyes and sighed. "God, you are so annoying," she muttered quietly. "Okay, put it this way: I am the popular one who wouldn't be seen *dead* around you. *You* are the stupid idiot who nobody likes. Get it now, loser?"

Simba frowned. "Hey! You can't say that to me!"

"And why not?" Nala challenged.

"Because I'm the Prince around here," Simba declared. "And you have to do everything I say!"

Nala laughed. "Prince? When was that? *Months* ago. Face it, Simba. Ever since everyone learned how pathetic and worthless you are, nobody wants you around anymore."

Okay, this is getting weird now, Simba thought to himself, as the weird just seemed to get weirder. What the heck was going on today? Why was Nala acting like this? Why did suddenly everybody hate him?

"But, Nala!" Simba complained, trying to get through to her. "We're best friends!"

Nala laughed again. "Yeah, right! Why would I *ever* be friends with you?"

Chapter 6: Chapter 6: Disowned

Chapter Six: Disowned

This was just... insane! So Nala wasn't his friend anymore? That just didn't make any sense! It didn't make any sense at all! Where had all this come from all of a sudden? This wasn't right!

"Nala, you *must* remember!" Simba argued. "Come on, I'm your best friend! You know, the one who takes care of you!"

Nala laughed once more, as if it was the stupidest thing she had ever heard. Simba? Her best friend? Yeah, right! That was the unlikeliest thing that could *ever* happen to her! The guy was a loser! Nobody liked him, he wasn't fun, and he *certainly* wasn't cute!

"If this is your idea of a joke, then it's not funny," Nala told him, still very unimpressed. "Why don't you just get out of here? No one wants you around here. *Epecially* me!"

Simba had an upset look on his face. "So... you don't like me? At all?"

Nala gasped, pretending to look shock. "Where did you get that idea from? Is it because you're an ugly freak who no one would look at twice?"

Simba looked down at the ground, tears forming in his eyes. He didn't like hearing this from his – *former* – best friend. It hurt him deeply on the inside, because he was so close to Nala. Hearing this from her made him feel quite worthless. It stripped him of his self-confidence, something only Nala seemed to admire.

There was still that *itch* in the back of Simba's mind, however. That little voice telling him that something had been changed somehow. Things had been altered, like it was a vision, a hallucination, or even a...

Dream. The word echoed in Simba's mind again and again. Maybe it was a dream... it wasn't real, it was fake. Fake, fake, fake.

It wouldn't be much of a dream, Simba thought to himself. *More like a nightmare*.

But how could this be a dream? It seemed so... so real. It couldn't be a dream! Simba could feel it, like it was real. Dreams always had that element of... surrealism to them. That little thing that told you it was all just a dream. When you could be in your darkest moment, there would always be that little feeling that you would wake up soon. That element of hope.

There were none of those feelings today. It felt real. It felt just like any other normal day Simba would spend in the Pride Lands. Except today Nala hated him. Had he done something wrong? He had upset her, somehow? Or maybe...

She had outgrown him. Maybe Nala had realised that Simba just wasn't any fun to be around anymore. Simba was always kind of scared that might happen someday. It was one of his greatest fears. He didn't want to lose his best friend. They had just become *too* close for them to split up now. He didn't want to let her go!

Simba decided to try and rectify the problem elsewhere. He'd figure things out with Nala later. Maybe he could ask for some advice, from his parents, perhaps?

It sounded like a good idea. Surely there was some reason this was happening, right? Simba had to find out! He wanted his best friend back!

"Fine," Simba said to Nala. "I'll go."

"Good!" Nala spat cruelly at him. "Don't bother coming back!"

He tried to ignore that comment from Nala, but it really stung him on the inside. He didn't like hearing things like that. It made him feel even more worthless than he did already.

Simba slowly walked away, glancing behind at Nala one more time. She glared at him like he was some kind of monster. She seemed to have lost that kindness in her soul. The kindness that the *old* Nala had.

But the old Nala was gone. But Simba hoped she wasn't gone forever.

"This is excellent!" Hago exclaimed as he and Bora watched Simba sleepwalk across the Pride Lands, and to his

impending doom.

"You should have asked me to do this *ages* ago," Bora told his sibling. "Would have been much easier than trying to kidnap them."

"You're right," Hago agreed. "I'm surprised I didn't think of it before."

"Well, you did always prefer to be kind of independent. You'd only work with someone else if there was something in it for you."

"Correct," said Hago. "That's why I joined forces with Scar. As you know, it didn't exactly go as smoothly as I hoped. But it doesn't matter now. I'll finally be rid of that troublesome Prince, and then I'll laugh in Scar's face when he discovers I have enslaved the entire kingdom!"

"Dad?" Simba called as he wandered into the den. "Mom? Anybody in here?"

Sarabi emerged from the darkness of the den, and gasped when she caught sight of her son. Her look of shock quickly turned to one of anger.

Simba smiled at her. "Oh, there you are!" He laughed nervously when he saw the angry expression on his mother's face. "Uh... why are you looking at me like that?" he asked. "Did I... Did I do something wrong?"

"What are you doing back here?" Sarabi asked him, anger evident in her voice which echoed throughout the den.

"I wanted to see you," Simba replied honestly. "I wanted to tell you something."

"You know you're not supposed to be here," his mother told him sternly.

"Huh?" Simba exclaimed, confused. 'Not supposed to be here'? What was *that* supposed to mean? He hoped he wasn't in trouble again. He hadn't done anything wrong! Well, except for falling asleep in the middle of the Pride Lands, but that was an accident! "Mom... what do you mean?"

"You know you were banished, Simba," Sarabi explained. "You were *not* supposed to return."

"*Banished*?" Simba exclaimed in shock. "Why would you banish *me*?"

"You have failed us, Simba," Sarabi told him. "You have failed us all. Your father and I are *ashamed* of you. Ashamed of your existence with us."

Simba could feel himself getting very worried, and very scared. "Wh-what d-do you m-mean?"

"We have explained this to you before, Simba," came the reply. "You are not good enough to be the future King. You are irresponsible, weak, *pathetic*. You are nothing like your father, and we have decided that it is best for the pride that we banish you."

"B-but who would t-take my p-place?" Simba stammered worriedly.

"Your Uncle Scar will take over one day," Sarabi informed him. "I'm sure he will be a very great King indeed. Certainly better than you would be."

Uncle Scar? No way! He... He wanted to take over the Pride Lands! Make everyone slaves who would do whatever he asked them to! He couldn't take over as King! He *couldn't*!

"You can't let him become King, Mom!" Simba argued. "He's evil! He wants to make you do all the work for him!"

"Don't be ridiculous," his mother scoffed. "He is a good person, and far better than you."

"Then... what do I do?" Simba asked, tears in his eyes. Even his own parents hated him?

"You will go, Simba," his mother ordered. "Now! As far as your father and I are concerned, you are no longer our son."

AN: Ooh, I'm cruel, aren't I? I'm sorry. Things will get better, I can assure you. Or will they...?

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: Fighting Back

AN: The end is here! Happy now?

Chapter Seven: Fighting Back

Simba slowly made his way back down Pride Rock, feeling numb from the conversation he had just had with his mother, who – as far as she was concerned – no longer thought of him as a son.

His other worst fear had been confirmed. Simba's fears weren't ones of monsters and creatures that wanted to tear him apart; his fears were on a more psychological level. Well, aside from his fear of spiders – those were terrifying little things! Otherwise, Simba's fears basically consisted of losing his best friend in the whole world, and the fear that he wouldn't make a good King, confirmed by his mother not a few minutes ago.

This was by far his worst day ever. Simba had never felt more upset, or hurt, or torn up inside. No one wanted him, no one liked him, and no one loved him. He had nothing to look forward to, except more sadness.

In the course of a few hours, everything had been changed. Simba's whole world had been turned upside down, and it didn't look like this nightmare was going to end.

Nightmare... The word echoed in the back of Simba's mind again. He was having that feeling again. That feeling that this situation was just a figment of his imagination. It was all in his head. It was all just some horrible nightmare.

The whole of this felt so very real. It didn't seem like it could possibly be a nightmare. But there was no way to tell, really. There were no feeling of hope like you would have in your usual nightmare. The only feeling Simba had right now was sadness. Pure sadness.

But in a situation like this, Simba would always try to look for a way out of it. He had succeeded in other things by just trying his best. What made this situation any different?

Simba sighed. *Maybe it is just a nightmare*, he thought to himself. *One of those nightmares where it's really hard to wake up. Where there's only a really special way to wake up.*

It seemed possible. This could just be a nightmare that was really difficult to wake up from. If it was a nightmare, then Simba might as well try to escape from it.

He sighed. *What do I have to lose?* he asked himself, making quite a point.

Simba had nothing to lose, because he had lost everything already.

"Just as I presumed," said Bora to his younger brother, continuing to watch Simba sleepwalk. "The cub's heading straight for the gorge. He'll never survive the fall from the edge."

Hago smiled evilly. "Good. That way there'll be no way to escape. The sharp rocks at the bottom will cause him to splatter all over the ground. No more Prince Simba."

"And then you'll be happy?" Bora presumed.

"No," Hago replied. "I'll be happy once I've finished drinking his blood from the ground."

Bora stared at his brother, wide-eyed and quite disturbed. "Okay... that's the freakiest thing I've ever heard."

There's gotta be a way out of this, Simba thought as he paced around the tree by the waterhole where he and Nala first met each other. He liked this spot. It made him think easier. He figured it was because it was the site of something very close to his heart.

There has to be something, he kept thinking. There was always a way out of things, right? Every cloud has a silver lining. There's always a light at the end of the tunnel. Always a glimmer of hope.

Well, if this is a dream, then I should fight back, Simba concluded. *Face my fears... Yeah! That could work! So what if I... reverse everything? So instead of Nala being mean to me... I'll be mean to Nala.*

Simba gasped at the thought. *No, I can't do that! That'll upset her! I don't want to hurt her feelings!*

Simba started to argue with himself. *Well, she did really upset you earlier... she really hurt your feelings. If she doesn't care about you, then why should you care about her?*

Simba took this into account. *That kinda makes sense... but she is my best friend. Or she was. But this is a dream, remember. That's not really Nala. It's just all in my head. That Nala isn't real. The real Nala will be there when I wake up. The real Nala. The Nala that I know and... like.*

Simba smiled. Maybe he could escape his darkest fears after all by changing things, just like things had been changes for him.

Nala rolled her eyes when she saw Simba wandering over to her again, a smile on his face. She *despised* that smile! It was too friendly, too nice. That wasn't how people were supposed to be! They were supposed to be mean and cruel. It was much more fun that way!

"Hey!" Simba said brightly. "How are you feeling now?"

"Sick," Nala replied, a cruel smile on her face, "because you're here."

Simba ignored the comment. His body was filled with courage now. He knew he could bring things back to normal, if he just tried.

"That's great!" Simba exclaimed, sounding oddly happy about her mean remark. "Because I feel sick to see you, too!"

Nala looked suddenly surprised. "Huh?" she exclaimed, not really expecting Simba to come out with this.

"Yeah, I did just say that," Simba told her. "Just *looking* at you makes me want to throw up everywhere. I can't believe I actually even liked you once! Boy, was I stupid or what?"

There was a glimmer of hurt in her eyes, but she tried to ignore it. She couldn't have feeling like that. She wouldn't allow it. Her heart was filled with nothing but pure, searing hatred for this cub in front of her!

"That's not a very nice thing to say, you know," she told him, not really wanting to say it.

Simba shrugged, an uncaring look in his eyes. "The truth hurts," he remarked, a sly smile on his face. "Like it hurts me to look at you."

"Stop it!" Nala snapped.

"You really don't deserve to be friends with me anyway," Simba continued, ignoring her.

"I don't *want* to be friends with you!" Nala argued.

"Ah, shut up. No one cares what you think. I know how irresistible I am. I bet I can get way more friends than you. Face it, Nala – you're nothing without me. You *need* me. More than you'll ever know."

"I don't need—"

"Go on, try and tell me you don't need me. You can feel it though, can't you? Inside you. You really *want* me to be friends with you. You won't feel yourself unless you're my friend. But I'll never be your friend. You're not good enough for me."

"I... I..." Nala couldn't find the right words to say. The more Simba insulted her, the more she began to believe everything he was saying to her. Maybe she truly was nothing without him...

"He's nearly there!" Hago exclaimed to Bora.

Simba was making his way across another field. The enormous gorge in the middle of the Pride Lands lay just ahead. Simba was slowly walking to his death, but what Hago and Bora didn't know was that Simba was fighting back, doing everything he could to try and escape from his nightmare.

"Soon victory shall be mine!" Hago declared, laughing evilly.

"Don't forget to give me some credit, too," said Bora.

"Of course, brother," Hago agreed, nodding. "How could I *possibly* forget you? You're the one who came up with this genius scheme! Any time you need something from my kingdom, you can have it. You still want a girlfriend, you can have her!"

"Girlfriend?" repeated Bora. "Why would I want a girlfriend?"

"Well, you were in love with that girl Kuponda, didn't you?" Hago asked.

"Hago, I haven't been in love with Kuponda since I was three months old," Bora informed his brother.

Hago looked surprised. "Oh... Really? I have to keep up with what's going on in your life more often."

Simba wasn't too far from the edge of the gorge. It would only be a matter of minutes before Hago and Bora achieved victory.

Simba could see Nala was beginning to crack under the pressure. He was changing the way she thought about him. "What's the matter?" Simba teased. "Cat got your tongue?" He laughed. "You're so worthless. You don't deserve me. You don't deserve *anyone*. I don't even know why I'm wasting my time telling you. I'm going!"

Simba stormed off, not looking back once.

Nala let out a loud cry, chasing after him. "Simba!" She jumped in front of him, blocking his path and hugging him. "Please don't go!"

"Why not?" Simba asked.

"I'm... I'm sorry, okay?" she replied, looking desperate for him to stay with her. "I... I really like you! I want to be your friend! I want to be your best friend! Forever!"

Simba smiled, seeing how badly Nala wanted him now. "Good. Do you know why?"

"No. Why?" Nala asked.

"Because that means I'm gonna wake up."

"This is it!" Hago cried excitedly as Simba sleepwalked towards the edge of the gorge, his grisly death just a few feet away from him. "Finally! Victory shall be mine!"

Hago hurried closer to Simba, closely followed by Bora. "This is the best bit," Bora told him.

"I just can't wait!" Hago exclaimed. "Never again will I have to suffer! My greatest enemy will be no more!"

Simba continued to walk closer and closer towards the edge. His death was imminent. Closer, closer, closer... Hago was wriggling with anticipation, wanting Simba to just finally fall from the edge. One more step and Simba would be dead!

Only, Simba didn't go over the edge. He stopped just before he took the final step that would seal his fate.

"What?" Hago exclaimed, turning to Bora. "Bora, is this part of the act? Because he isn't moving!"

"Uh... I don't know," Bora replied, scratching his head. "It doesn't make sense to me."

"Well what do we do?" Hago asked, feeling anger beginning to boil inside of him.

Simba opened his eyes, now awake. He was free from the nightmare, and when he came to his senses he leapt back in surprise. If he had taken another step he would have been sent tumbling to his doom!

"What the...?" Simba exclaimed, backing away from the edge slowly. "What happened?"

"No!" Hago cried, seeing Simba had awoken from his nightmare. Angrily, he looked at Bora. "What's happening? You said he would be sent to his death! You said there was no way to wake him up!"

"Actually, that's not entirely true," Bora informed him. "There are a few loopholes. For example, if he managed to somehow face the fears of his nightmare he would wake up."

"And you didn't mention this to me before, *why?*" Hago roared furiously.

Bora shrugged. "Must've slipped my mind."

"You... *idiot!*" he raged at the top of his voice.

Simba turned his head in the direction of Hago's voice, and his eyes widened in shock when he saw him there.

Oh, man! Simba exclaimed in his head. *This doesn't look too good...*

"I'll just kill him and get it over with!" Hago exclaimed, swiftly aiming his staff at Simba's head.

The problem was, he did it so fast that he twisted one of his back bones, causing quite a loud cracking sound.

The sound of Hago's pain-filled screams could be heard echoing throughout the Pride Lands.

Hago crumpled to the floor, dropping his staff. "My back! My back!" he cried in pain.

"That looked like it hurt," Bora pointed out.

Hago glared at his brother. "*Really? It feels just fine to me!*"

Hago breathed deeply, realising that another one of his schemes had foiled. He pushed his face into the ground. "When will I ever win?"

Bora stared at his little brother with sympathy. "Do you want me to carry you back?" he offered.

"That'd be lovely," Hago replied.

I think it's time for me to go, Simba thought. He didn't think Hago and whoever was with him would be too much trouble. Clearly their plan had failed, and it looked like Hago was in too much pain to try and kill Simba again.

I win! Simba exclaimed in his head. *Again,* he added with a sly smile as he walked away, careful not to cross Hago's path.

Nala's eyes flickered open when she heard someone approaching her. When she came to her senses she realised it was Simba.

"Simba?" she said groggily. "What have you been doing?"

Simba lay down beside her, and smiled. "Nothing much."

The End

AN: This story felt quick for some reason. I don't mind, because next is the best story of the series so far! Keep reading...

NEXT TIME: Nala falls head over paws for a new cub in the Pride Lands, and Simba finds he has to confront his true feelings for his best friend, or risk losing her forever.